



**Press Release
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For Immediate Release**

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**November Actions: BANA Elected New Chair,
Approved New Member, and Voted on Revision of Braille Formats**

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) held its fall meeting on November 3–6, 2011, in Baltimore, MD. The National Federation of the Blind (NFB), a BANA member organization, hosted the meeting, which included an Open Forum that provided an opportunity for participants to learn more about the workings of BANA and to provide feedback to the Board about braille.

During its three-day meeting, the BANA Board reviewed and acted on semiannual reports from its eighteen committees and deliberated issues and challenges facing braille users and producers. Notable actions by the Board included the approval of an application of full BANA membership by Horizons for the Blind; the election of officers; and consideration of the revision of the formats guidelines publication, a monumental project undertaken by the Braille Formats Technical Committee. Additionally, BANA welcomed two new Board Representatives – Ruth McKinney from Braille Institute of America and Susan Spicknall from National Braille Press.

The newly elected BANA officers for 2012 are:

Chair: Frances Mary D’Andrea, representing the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB), replaces Judy Dixon who is completing a five-year tenure as BANA Chair;

Vice Chair: Mary Nelle McLennan, representing the American Printing House for the Blind (APH);

Secretary: Jennifer Dunnam, representing the National Federation of the Blind (NFB);

Treasurer: Sue Reilly, representing the California Transcribers and Educators of the Blind and Visually Impaired (CTEBVI).

Based on extensive review prior to the meeting, the Board evaluated the proposed revision to the Braille Formats publication. The previous edition of these guidelines for making structural decisions when transcribing was last published in 1997. In an email vote completed in mid-November, the BANA Board approved the adoption of the *Braille Formats: Principles of Print to Braille Transcription, 2011*. In

the coming months, after publishing preparations are complete, the final document will be posted on the BANA website and will be produced for purchase. BANA recognizes the hard work and remarkable commitment of the Braille Formats Technical Committee in completing this complex project.

In the months before the Board meeting, Horizons for the Blind, a not-for-profit organization located in Crystal Lake, IL, applied for full membership in BANA. After reviewing the extensive application, the BANA Board approved full membership for Horizons for the Blind and welcomed them into the organization.

BANA's next meeting will take place in connection with the National Braille Association's conference in St. Louis. The dates of this spring meeting will be April 28 through 30, 2012, with the Open Forum scheduled for Saturday, April 28. Additional details about the spring meeting will be announced in the next few months.

For additional resource information, visit www.brailleauthority.org

The mission and purpose of the Braille Authority of North America are to assure literacy for tactile readers through the standardization of braille and/or tactile graphics. BANA promotes and facilitates the use, teaching, and production of braille. It publishes rules, interprets, and renders opinions pertaining to braille in all existing codes. It deals with codes now in existence or to be developed in the future, in collaboration with other countries using English braille. In exercising its function and authority, BANA considers the effects of its decisions on other existing braille codes and formats; the ease of production by various methods; and acceptability to readers.